Indian Airlines' agreement with Airbus Industry

1487. SHRI R. P. GOENKA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that recently the Indian Airlines (re-christened "Indian") has signed an agreement with Airbus Industry for purchase of 43 new aircraft as part of its fleet expansion plan;

(b) if so, the details thereof, including the type(s) of aircraft proposed to be purchased, the time-frame fixed for their delivery and tentative allocation for their deployment in different regions; and

(c) to what extent the expanded fleet is expected to boost the "Indian" considering its fall in the market share, especially when private airlines are also expanding their respective fleets?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Indian Airlines has executed an Agreement with Airbus Industry on 20th February, 2006 for purchase of 43 Airbus aircraft comprising 19 A-319, 4 A-320 and 20 A-321 powered with CFM International engines. These aircraft are scheduled to be delivered during November, 2006 and March, 2010. The aircraft will be deployed on the overall Network of Indian Airlines and Alliance Air.

(c) The induction of new aircraft is envisaged to replace the entire fleet of 3 A-300 and 11 B-737-200 aircraft in a phased manner and also to augment capacity to cater to the increase in traffic. The new aircraft will help Indian Airlines to step up growth and modernisation, expand its market and further improve the quality of its product offering.

International Air Services from Hyderabad

1488. SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the efforts being made or already made in the last three years to operate more direct flights to major cities of the world from Hyderabad; and

(b) the status of such efforts and proposal?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) During the last three years, Hyderabad has been granted as point of call for the designated airlines of Australia, Sri Lanka, New Zealand, Canada, Germany, Netherlands, France and Thailand apart from UAE, Qatar, Oman, Singapore, Saudi Arabia, Malaysia.

Hyderabad is also available as a point of call to the designated airlines of USA and UK. Chinese carriers can operate to/from any six points in India, including Hyderabad. However, actual operations by any airline is always guided by its commercial judgement. Air India and Indian Airlines are operating from Hyderabad to Riyadh, Dammam, Jeddah, Bangkok, Dubai, Kuwait, Muscat, Sharjah and Singapore.

Guidelines on employment of foreign pilots

†1489. SHRI AJAY MAROO: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that due to shortage of pilots in the country, many airline companies are appointing foreign pilots;

(b) whether Government have issued any guidelines in this regard keeping in view the security of the country; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) *vide* Civil Aviation Requirements Section 7, Series 'G' Part-ll dated 8-10-1999 has issued guidelines for validation of foreign pilot licences which *inter-alia* requires the operators to submit details of the pilots for facilitating security clearance. Before approving foreign pilots, their security clearances are obtained from the concerned agencies in the Government.

New airport building at Amritsar

1490. SHRIMATI SUKHBUNS KAUR: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state.

(a) the progress so far made in the construction of the new airport building and terminal at Amritsar and by when it is likely to be completed; and

(b) the estimated cost thereof and the cost escalation, if any, likely to be incurred thereby?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) The upgradation and development of infrastructure including the Terminal Building under first phase at Amritsar Airport is in final stage of completion. The ancillary buildings such as

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.